



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Attorney General Jackley Warns Public of Increased Number of Sweepstakes Scams Targeting South Dakotans**

PIERRE, S.D. – Attorney General Marty Jackley is asking consumers statewide to reach out to their friends or neighbors to warn them of the dangers of sweepstake scams. The Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division has had several victims come forward to file formal complaints against these types of telemarketers. Many of the complaints come from victims who believed they were working with Publisher's Clearing House, when in fact they were wiring money out of the country to places like Jamaica. One senior has wired as much as \$8,000 to an unknown source.

"Take the time to talk with friends, neighbors and coworkers to make sure they understand the danger in responding to sweepstake offers. Keep in mind that the minute the telemarketer asks for an upfront fee to receive a sweepstakes winning, it is a scam," said Jackley.

Here are three tips to avoid getting caught in a sweepstakes scam:

- If someone sends you a check and asks you to send money back in return, don't. No legitimate offer would expect you to send money back if you have been deemed a winner.
- Be cautious of sound alike names. Scammers often use the names of legitimate companies in an attempt to deceive and gain consumers trust.
- If someone asks you to wire money to claim a sweepstakes prize, don't. Legitimate companies do not ask for money upfront to covers fees and they do not ask for money to be wired before an award can be paid out.

If you have been a victim of this scam or would like additional information contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division as 1-800-300-1986 or [consumerhelp@state.sd.us](mailto:consumerhelp@state.sd.us).